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ATOMIC 6-26
WITH NUCLEAR
BY STEVE GERSTEL

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- MOUNTING CONCERN OVER AMERICAN ATOMIC TECHNOLOGY IN THE MIDDLE EAST HAS TRIGGERED A MAJOR ATTEMPT TO GIVE CONGRESS VETO POWER OVER PRESIDENT NIXON'S OFFERS OF NUCLEAR REACTORS TO EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

THE JOINT ATOMIC COMMITTEE GAVE QUICK AND UNANIMOUS APPROVAL TUESDAY TO LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD ALLOW CONGRESS, THROUGH A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION WHICH IS NOT SUBJECT TO VETO, TO KILL NIXON'S AGREEMENTS MADE WITH EGYPT AND ISRAEL DURING HIS RECENT JOURNEY THROUGH THE MIDDLE EAST.

THE MEASURE, EXPECTED EARLY AND OVERWHELMING APPROVAL IN CONGRESS, DOES NOT SPECIFY THE AGREEMENTS BUT THERE WAS NO QUESTION THAT THE BILL IS DESIGNED TO GIVE CONGRESS THE FINAL SAY ON WHETHER EGYPT AND ISRAEL WILL BE ALLOWED TO HAVE AMERICAN NUCLEAR REACTORS.

DEFENSE SECRETARY JAMES SCHLESINGER, A FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION, SAID HE COULD "GUARANTEE" THAT SAFEGUARDS WOULD BE STRONG ENOUGH TO PREVENT EGYPT FROM CONVERTING NUCLEAR REACTOR FUEL TO MILITARY PURPOSES BECAUSE AS OF NOW EGYPT DOES NOT HAVE THE TECHNICAL CAPACITY TO CREATE AN ATOMIC WEAPON AND THE DIVERSION PROCESS WOULD TAKE SO LONG IT WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO EVADE THE INSPECTORS.

THE ISSUE ALSO CAME UP IN A HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE WHERE REP. BENJAMIN ROSENTHAL, D-N.Y., CALLED IT THE "LOONIEST IDEA I HAVE HEARD SINCE I HAVE BEEN IN WASHINGTON."

"THERE IS NO WAY TO MAKE SAFEGUARDS FOR THESE THINGS IRONCLAD," ROSENTHAL DECLARED.

THE COMMITTEE VERSION WOULD REQUIRE NIXON TO SUBMIT AGREEMENTS WITH EGYPT AND ISRAEL TO THE COMMITTEE WHICH THEN WOULD HAVE 30 DAYS BEFORE MAKING A REPORT AND A RECOMMENDATION TO THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE. WITHIN 60 DAYS OF THE SUBMISSION CONGRESS WOULD HAVE TO APPROVE A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL TO VETO EITHER OR BOTH THE AGREEMENTS.

UNDER PRESENT LAW, A PRESIDENT NEED ONLY SUBMIT AN AGREEMENT FOR THE PEACEFUL USE OF NUCLEAR POWER TO CONGRESS FOR A 30-DAY PERIOD AND THE ONLY WAY FOR CONGRESS TO BLOCK AN AGREEMENT IS TO PASS A BILL SUBJECT TO VETO.

SINCE 1954, THE UNITED STATES HAS ENTERED INTO 30 AGREEMENTS WITH

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FOREIGN NATIONS RANGING FROM NUCLEAR RESEARCH TO NUCLEAR REACTORS.
SEN. JOHN O. PASTORE, D-R.I., VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT
CONITTEE, SAID "THE PURPOSE IS TO AFFORD AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CONGRESS
TO BECOME A PARTNER AND TO BE ABLE TO SAY YEA OR NAY."

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